

# CHRISTIAN BAPTISM:

ITS

DUTY AND OBJECT

SCRIPTURALLY CONSIDERED AND ENFORCED.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

COPIOUS EXTRACTS FROM IMPORTANT HISTORIES ON  
IMMERSION, POURING, SPRINKLING, LUSTRATION,  
EXORCISM, ETC., ETC., SHOWING SOME CURIOUS  
DOCTRINES AND WORKINGS OF PAGAN  
TRADITIONS, AND CHRISTIAN  
SUPERSTITIONS.

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He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.—*Jesus*.

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus.—*Peter*.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.—*Paul*.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN putting forth this work on Christian Baptism we have not considered it important to occupy much space in giving long essays or extended criticism of the learned on this subject. The nature and object of baptism are so plainly stated in the Scriptures, and the Greek terms, *Bapto*, *Baptizo*, *Baptos*, *Baptisma*, are so decisive in their primary uses, as to lead all careful students, who prefer the word of God to vain tradition, to a correct conclusion ; although many able and careful Bible students have yielded to the pressing influences of false traditions, capricious tastes of the proud, and practised directly opposite to their teachings and admissions on baptism.

The case of Dr. Adam Clark, a Methodist divine, is to the point. He says, "The multitudes who embraced Christianity in apostolic times became converts on the evidence of the resurrection of Christ. The baptism which they received, they considered as an emblem of their *natural death and resurrection*. This doctrine St. Paul most pointedly teaches, Rom. 6: 3, 4, 5. It is evident from this that all who died in the faith of Christ died in the faith of the resurrection. So they were baptized in the same faith.

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“But as they receive baptism as an emblem of *death*, in voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the *resurrection* unto eternal *life*, in coming up out of the water. Thus they are *baptized for the dead* in perfect faith of the resurrection.” — Clarke’s *Com.* 1 Cor. 15: 29. The comments and teachings of many other eminent men, who departed from this practice, are candid and clear on the point.

A sense of duty to my Christian brethren has led me to this humble effort. I have left many interesting items of history on this subject unnoticed. I have endeavored to avoid sarcasm and other forms of language which tend to irritate opponents; although there is a wide field for such indulgences in this direction.

The histories cited are believed to be reliable, and the points critically considered. Should any be led to obedience by this work, or should any be enlightened and led into the truth, and thereby be benefited through the blessing of God, the author will have gained his object.

I. C. W.

YARMOUTH, ME, February, 1865.



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THE  
DUTY AND OBJECT  
OF  
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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THE ordinance of Christian Baptism has been, and is yet, a subject of much discussion among the professors of Christianity; and no little strife and bitterness have been occasioned by not accepting the plain and simple testimony of the Scriptures on this subject.

This pamphlet is addressed to such, and only such, as acknowledge the Bible as divine authority, sufficient to settle the question of the object of the ordinance of baptism, and the duty of the believer.

All such persons should require no argument to convince them that the Scriptures are to be obeyed, in respect to all the ordinances of the gospel, by every one who accepts Christ as his Saviour.

Yet many Christians *do need* that their attention be directed to the teachings of the Scriptures, and their minds stirred up to consider the great importance of making a practical use of the doctrine taught therein.

You all admit that the words of Jesus are clothed with power, because he is the great Teacher sent from God the Father, and whom we are commanded to "hear in all things" and to obey. "He spake with authority." "He spake as never man spake." He is declared to be "The wisdom of God, and the power of God, to you who believe." Christ declares, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

This being admitted by all Christians, we come directly to the subject of

#### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

That it is the duty of all, who hear the gospel, to believe in Christ, you all admit and teach. We ask you, Is it their duty to be baptized also? If so, it is your duty, unless you have performed that duty.

But many of you hesitate to decide on this question, doubting the importance of baptism; questioning *why* it should be required, and what good it can do to be baptized.

But what is believing in Christ? It is to be fully satisfied in your heart that he is the Son of God, — the Saviour of men, — that he is the atoning sacrifice for sin. — Matt. 16: 16, 18. Heb. 10: 12, 14. It is to believe that God raised him from the dead, according to the Scriptures (Rom. 4: 24, 25. 1 Cor. 15: 1-4), for our justification and salvation. It is embraced in this, believe the record which God hath given of his Son. — 1 John 5: 10. The Father says of Christ,



“ This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.” Let us then listen to the Son of God on the subject of baptism.

While here in the flesh, unfolding the plan of redemption, showing the source of “ life and immortality,” and teaching how to obtain it, Jesus announced, “ He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” — Mark 16 : 16. This statement was made to his apostles, whom he had chosen to continue the ministry of the word, and to communicate it to future generations. After giving them his charge, he adds a promise which proves that the commission is to extend through the entire dispensation of mercy, to the end of time.

Here are the commission and the promise : “ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” — Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

With these words, from the lips of the Son of God, falling on the ears of candid, thoughtful persons, who believe the Scriptures, no cavil is expected ; no allegorical, metaphorical, or mystical course of reasoning should for a moment be allowed to enter the heart ; for if such a course is allowed, you open the way to doubt, and finally to disregard all of the teachings of Christ.

The duty to be baptized is as clearly and definitely stated, as the duty to believe ; and no cavilling, doubting, or reasoning can evade it. It is true that cavillers have said, “ Baptism is an old Jewish institution, and

not intended for the Christian dispensation." But this is an indication of great ignorance, as we shall show.

Vain philosophy states that "there is no use for baptism; it can do no good." The Mystics reason that baptism means some mysterious operation of the Spirit on the mind, without the use of water. But all such "doubtful disputations" of those who have disobedient hearts must, as we proceed, vanish before the plain truth of God.

Others, who believe baptism to be enjoined upon all believers, doubt the propriety of urging them to obey. But, with our commission before us as ministers of Christ, how can we be true to him and the people of "the household of faith," without urging it?

Hear it again: "Teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you." With such a command from the great Head of the Church, no minister of his is guiltless who does not teach, and seek to impress upon the heart of every believer in Christ, the duty of being baptized, and of attending to it as soon as circumstances will allow.

But the question often arises, "Would you have me baptized before I *feel* it duty?" By no means; but I would have you so instructed in the gospel as to begin to *feel it duty* as soon as you decided to be a follower of Christ.

To follow Christ is to obey Christ. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," says Jesus. "This is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments." But many converts are taught by their ministers and guides to wait a while and see if their convictions are real, and

their change thorough, before being baptized. This seems to be tempting the devil. At least it is an attempt to defer duty to Christ, to see whether he will approbate you as a servant in disobedience. This is not wisdom. Let us examine the record on this point, and it will show us both our duty to be baptized, and the example of Christ and his early followers in this matter.

In Matt. 3:13, 16, we find that, when Christ had come to an age suited to enter upon his public ministry under the law, he came to John the Baptist to be baptized of him, and was baptized in the river Jordan. Thus he commences the public duties of his divine mission. Some have argued that this baptism was his induction into the priest's office, and an antitype of the washing of the priests, under the law dispensation, when they entered the priest's office. But such reasoning is entirely without foundation; for Paul says, "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law," etc. — Heb. 8:4, 5. And, furthermore, he was not of the tribe of Levi, but of Judah. Christ's priestly office did not commence until after his resurrection.

His baptism was for another purpose; and while John was requested to perform the rite, and he pleads his own inferiority, Jesus replies, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

God had instituted this ordinance, and caused it to be introduced by John, when he sent him to preach the gospel, and to baptize all believers; and as Christ was now to commence his public work for the Father,



and for the fallen race of man, by proclaiming the good news of his kingdom, by dying as an atonement for sin, and rising the triumphant conqueror of death, it became him to observe this rite which was so significant of the work he had undertaken;—in the doing of which the Father anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and then publicly acknowledged him before the assembled multitude, by a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” — Matt. 3: 13. Such is Christ’s example, and the Father’s approval, clearly stated; yet, some who dislike the cross, and oppose Christian baptism, affirm that John’s baptism was a Jewish institution, and that Christ was baptized to keep the law. This, as we have before stated, is an indication of ignorance. This ordinance was not of Jewish origin. Moses never instituted it. Neither did the Jews ever practise it in the church before Christ.

But it will be asked, “Do not some learned men teach that the Jews did so; and do not others assert that Christian baptism is a continuation of proselyte baptism among the Jews?” Yes, they have so written and taught, but without any proof. “And,” says a very learned critic on this point, “it saves a great deal of labor to believe the report; for, if the matter be investigated, the statement will appear untrue, and the reasoning from an imaginary fact, illogical.”

“There was no baptism in the world, among any people, till John; and the purification of a proselyte by dipping *himself*, which some very inaccurately call baptism, will ap-



pear to have been a late institution, long after the time of John the Baptist." — HISTORY OF BAPTISM, p. 35.

It is true that the Jewish "wise men," as they are called, have inserted a rite that every proselyte from among the Gentiles should *wash himself* all over in water, before being received into the Jewish Church. Dr. Gale says: —

"We have frequent mention, among the ancients, of the Hemero-baptists, who were so called from their practice of washing themselves thus (all over) every day." — GALE'S REFLECTIONS ON WALL'S HISTORY OF INFANT BAPTISM.

This class is inserted in the catalogue of Jewish sects, by Hegesippus.

"Justin Martyr also, in mentioning several sects of Jews, mentions these among the rest, and calls them Baptists, from the signification of the word" (Hemero). — HISTORY OF BAPTISM, p. 35.

Let it be remembered that these did not baptize each other, nor baptize themselves as a divine rite, by which the term "Baptists" is applied to them. They *dipped* themselves in water for health or cleanliness.

As there is much pretension by certain ones on this point, and because of the above statements of history, we wish to remove all doubt on the subject of Jewish baptism. We therefore give one more quotation from one of those who are the most likely to know whereof they affirm.

Dr. Benson, a Methodist commentator, after a full

and thorough examination of this subject, in order to argue against Mr. Emlyn's view of proselyte baptism, says : —

“I have not found any instance of one person's washing another, by way of consecration, purification, or sanctification, except that of Moses washing Aaron and his sons, when he set them apart to the office of priests ; Lev. 8 : 6.

“I cannot find that the Jews do at the present practise any such rite as baptizing the proselytes that go over to them, though they are said to make them wash themselves.

“Where is there any intimation of such a practice among the Jews before the coming of our Lord? If any one could produce any testimony from the *Old Testament*, the *Apocrypha*, *Josephus*, or *Philo*, that would be of great moment.

“In former times, proselytes coming over from Heathenism to the Jewish religion, used to wash *themselves*, which is a very different thing from baptism, or one person washed by another.

“I wish to see these difficulties cleared up; for if what is called proselyte baptism is not baptism, and the Jews had no institution of such a washing as they called baptism in the Old Testament, and no mention of such a thing in the Apocrypha, nor in Josephus, nor in Philo, what, in this age of the world, signify the conjectures of a Lightfoot, and a Wall, or even an Emlyn?” — BENSON ON PAUL'S EPISTLES, Vol. I. Dis. 8.

We have critically examined the above point, for the benefit of such as have been perplexed by reading books and articles of nonsense, assertions and conjectures, by modern writers about “Jewish baptism.”

It is pretty evident that John, who baptized Jesus, was the first baptizer ever known. His parents were both righteous before God, walking in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless. — Luke 1 : 6. He left Hèbron, the place of his birth, a wilderness, hill-country, and came down to the plains of Judea. He came not of himself, nor was he employed by any council, or any ecclesiastical power. Neither did the populace set him up.

The word of God came to him in the wilderness. — Luke 3 : 2. He followed, and as he journeyed, he taught the masses to prepare to receive the Mèssiah, by laying aside sin and superstition, and by the exercise of the principle of universal justice and benevolence. He gave rules of righteousness to the several classes who came to hear him. He baptized such as believed his message, constantly directing their attention, not to himself, but to Jesus the Messiah, as Lord of all.

His name is connected with baptism because he was the first who ever administered that rite. It was, "John the Baptist," — or the Baptizer. God called him to the work of baptizing men, as he himself testifies: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." — John 1 : 32-34.

With this statement of John, that God sent him to



baptize with water, and the absence of all testimony that any ever baptized before him, it is conclusive that God then and there instituted this ordinance, especially for the observance of the Christian Church, to signify their faith and hope in a Saviour dying and living again, or rather, a Saviour once dead but now risen from death to die no more. Therefore, Christ, as our Head and Representative, observed this rite at the commencement of his public life, to set us an example, and to present an emblem of the death he was soon to suffer for the redemption of the world from death.

When Christ's enemies thought to perplex him with a hard question, he proposed one which perplexed them, and which is in proof of our position just taken. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" Had it been an old institution, there would have been no force in the question. Neither would it have been a proper one, as it would not have been *John's* baptism.

But if some will continue to quote Mark 7: 1-5, and argue from it, as many do, that the Jewish Church did baptize, then let Jesus be the judge of the virtues of such baptism. Hear him, as recorded in verses 7-9: "Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

Enough has been said on this point. We will return



to a point before stated, — that Christ sanctioned the institution of baptism, both by being obedient to its requirement, and teaching those who believed in him to observe it.

We are told that “Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John; though Jesus baptized not, but his disciples.” — John 3 : 22, 26 ; 4 : 1, 2. By this we see that baptism of believers was in constant practise during Christ’s ministry. Let us now notice the prominence he gives it in his teachings after his resurrection. Christ had made frequent mention of his death and resurrection, and he promised his disciples and apostles that, after he should rise from the dead, he would meet them in Galilee. — Matt. 26 : 32.

After he did rise from the dead, he sent messengers to tell them to meet him there. — Matt. 28 : 7–10. They met, and it was an assemblage of the greatest importance, gathered by Christ’s direction, to receive instructions from the great Head of the Church, which were to guide their future action in his work, and to come down to all after generations for their obedience. There, in the presence of the assembled multitude, he speaks in the most public and positive manner of baptism. — Matt. 28 : 18, 19. According to Paul (1 Cor. 15 : 6), there were “above five hundred *brethren*” present.

Listen to the command he there gave : “Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

This language is too plain to be misunderstood, too direct to be easily perverted. The sense shows that

such were to be baptized as *would* be taught and *believe* the gospel, and were determined to obey it. It does not command to take parents on conviction, and their children by surprise. The principles of the gospel are free from fraud or force.

But here the great question comes up,

#### WHAT IS THE OBJECT OF BAPTISM ?

It is a question which should be well considered, and scripturally answered for all candid inquirers, for it is difficult to bring the human mind to properly obey an ordinance for which it can see no reasonable object intended by its author. We can, indeed, be made to feel it duty to obey a superior, though we know not the cause of his command ; and we would not teach that a servant should not obey unless he knows why the thing is to be done. But we know that an ordinance is obeyed much more readily, cheerfully, and profitably when the object of it is seen and felt.

There is great reason to believe that very many have been mechanically baptized, when neither they nor the administrator had any real scriptural knowledge of the meaning of the ordinance. They have performed the act because they had read, and been taught, that it was duty ; but seeing no just cause why it was enjoined, and receiving neither benefit nor blessing by it.

Others, with too little faith in the simplicity and plain common sense of the Scriptures, and too little interest to study them, have made up their minds to be Christians, and to do what their minister told them

was right. But on inquiring the object of baptism, and being shown the way, by some minister or book, into the mists of error and darkness, they have concluded blindly to accept the performance of some ceremony which neither fulfils the command of Christ, nor satisfies their more enlightened conscience; or else, have become disgusted with sophistical reasonings on what was made to appear a meaningless ceremony, and so have neglected baptism altogether, paving the way for the neglect of other duties, and entire apostasy from Christ. Of such cases there are not a few. Let us carefully examine the Scriptures for the *primary* use of the term baptism, then for its *emblematical* and *typical* uses, and we can readily understand the object of water baptism without the necessity of large treatises and commentaries which have been written to explain the term and its uses.

All Christian men will concede that the all-wise God has an object in all he does and commands; that all the ordinances he institutes have a meaning, and are emblematical of some points of doctrine he has revealed.

A careful study of the Bible will show this to be so under the former dispensations; and it is an interesting study to learn how beautifully the covenants, circumcision, the tabernacle and temple service, all shadowed forth various points of the plan of redemption.

The same principle is found in the institution of the new covenant as developed by the gospel. With this view of the matter let us read Luke 12:50, where Jesus says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and



how am I straitened (*pained*, margin) until it be accomplished."

What does baptism here mean? All well-instructed Bible students will say that Christ refers to his death. This being so, then baptism scripturally and primarily signifies death, being overwhelmed in death. This is a grand illustration of the work Christ had undertaken. He came into the world to save men from the consequences of sin. To do this he must seek man where he was lost, — in death. Sin had entered, death followed, and all our race were subject to it.

Christ must meet the claim of the law which Adam broke, and also shed innocent blood as an atonement for the sins of the people; for he undertook to redeem them who were under the law. To do this he must suffer death, enter the gates of Hades, obtain its keys, and thus be able to bring man out of this dark abode.

As this great work was about to be accomplished for man's redemption, the Lord instituted the sublime and significant ordinance of baptism to shadow forth the counsel and plan of God that Christ should die, and rise again from the dead.

While John was God's chosen messenger to go before, to declare that plan, and to introduce the Messiah to the people, it seems quite proper that the ordinance of baptism should be introduced with his ministry. In this rite is an emblem of death as connected with sin. Therefore, as John preached, he practised "the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus." — Acts 19: 4.



To follow out this idea, Jesus himself was baptized, to show the death he must suffer, and the resurrection he would bring about for the deliverance of man from the grave.

And to keep this fact in the hearts of his people, when Christ was about to personally leave the church which had been gathered by his ministry, he required of his chosen messengers that they should not only preach in all the world the gospel of the kingdom, but that they should also baptize those who believed, as we have before shown.

The continuation of this ordinance to all generations of believers, would direct their attention back to the death which Christ suffered for their sins, and his resurrection for their justification (from the law), as it would also direct their faith and hope forward to their own resurrection from death to eternal life, through Christ; while at the same time it emblematically represented the moral change wrought in them by faith, a "dying to sin, and walking in newness of life."

That this is the nature and object of baptism, the entire action and arguments of the apostles on this subject prove beyond contradiction. Let us now look at

#### PAUL'S ARGUMENTS.

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together

in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." — Rom. 6 : 3, 5.

Why be baptized into Christ's death? Because he died for sin, that we might die to sin. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" — Rom. 6 : 2. As they were dead to sin, they were "buried by baptism into death" to signify it; also, to signify that, as Christ rose from the dead, so they would rise to an incorruptible and immortal life, which must be first symbolized by "newness of life" *morally*.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." — Rom. 6 : 6.

Here the reason for baptism, and also its nature, are so clearly set forth by the inspired commentator, that all may see it; and it is only the work of false tradition which perverts the minds of any who cannot comprehend its intention. Such minds are always greatly perplexed to find how they may explain away this text when quoted to them.

Let us now turn to 1 Cor. 15 : 29. Paul is arguing the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, in consequence of, and through the resurrection of Christ. In doing so, he first alludes to the proof of Christ's resurrection, and states the fact that he is raised, then asks the significant question, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"

Here Paul shows that believers were baptized to signify their faith in the resurrection of Christ and

his people, of which baptism is a true emblem. And he intimates that there is no virtue in it if there were no resurrection of the dead.

We will now turn to Gal. 3 : 27, and hear Paul again. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." In this statement we again find that it is putting on Christ by being "buried with him by baptism, into his death."

Once more (Col. 2 : 12), "Buried with him (Christ) in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." In each and all of these scriptures we cannot fail to see that baptism is introduced to show that the church hereby give expression to the world of their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, as a means by which all who believe in him may gain victory over sin and its effects — death, by being finally raised by him to eternal life.

But there is a cross to bear in the observance of this ordinance, when looked at in the light of the Bible, and the disciple inquires,

"IS BAPTISM A SAVING ORDINANCE?"

We reply, Yes, inasmuch as all obedience is saving in its tendency. No Christian can knowingly refuse to obey a command, or perform a duty, which God has enjoined upon him, and persist in such refusal, and be saved. Christ has become "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." — Heb. 5 : 9. If men do not *learn* duty in some points, and die without performing the action imposed by such duty, the



Lord may overlook such ignorance. We are not to be the judge. The faithful disciple can only show his love for Christ by a disposition to know and do his will, as is declared in his commandments. "This is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments." Therefore all who really mean to be the children of God, will love to obey him.

We do not endorse the ideas of some, that none will be saved but those who are baptized; and that none are baptized properly unless they have correct views of all features of the gospel hope; and that none receive the gift of the Holy Spirit until baptized; and that baptism is the new birth, regeneration, &c. &c. Such views have been, and are yet, held by some Christians, who devote much time to, and lay great stress on, certain expressions of Scripture connected with baptism. But such ideas cannot be established by any legitimate scriptural argument.

When men get the idea that baptism is the new birth mentioned by the Saviour to Nicodemus (John 3 : 5), they will call it regeneration, and teach it as the only way of salvation. Such views tend to mischief and great perversion of the Scriptures.

Those who believe original sin morally defiles infants, will teach that infants should be sprinkled to wash away sin. Those who embrace the notion that no believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit until baptized, will rest their entire argument on the words of Peter (Acts 2 : 28), while they forget or pervert the Scripture account of the conversion of Cornelius and his household, who received the gift of the Holy Ghost

on believing, and were baptized afterwards. — Acts 10 : 44, 47 ; 11 : 14. While those who believe the baptism of a disciple is not valid, because he had not seen all the truth on the nature of the gospel hope, will quote Acts 19 : 3–5, and add a sophistical course of reasoning to make out a case ; because it seems that some of John's disciples were baptized a second time, after they were informed that there was a Holy Spirit.

Having given these theories a careful examination, we find they are not sustained by the concurrent testimony of Scripture evidence. They can only be made to appear true by a strained and unnatural effort on isolated expressions of Scripture texts.

There is another class who entertain the notion, that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the only one enjoined on believers, and quote Eph. 4 : 5, — “ One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” The first point to settle is, did Paul mean the baptism of the Holy Ghost ? If he did, second, then we all need that baptism. Yet in such a case we should not follow apostolic teaching or example if we rested in this ; for Peter told the penitent ones (Acts 2 : 38), to “ repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” And they were baptized.

Again, when the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius believed Peter's preaching, the Holy Ghost fell on them, and Peter asks, “ Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized ? ” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. — Acts 10 : 47, 48. The “ one baptism,” of which Paul

speaks, is clearly shown to be that of being "buried with Christ by baptism (in water) into death." It is not many, nor various forms, and various times, but "*one baptism.*" Yet some may ask, "Does not Paul say (1 Cor. 12: 13), 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body'?" He does so say; and let me here ask, are you baptized into the one body? If not, then it is your duty to attend to it at once. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The Spirit of God leads to obedience, and, if you will follow its leadings, you will be "baptized into the one body" of Christ.

#### WHEN TO BE BAPTIZED.

The question often arises among converts to Christ, whether they are in a suitable state of heart to be baptized; and many have deferred it in order to be sure they were sincere.

Let us turn and see how the apostles understood and practised it. We will look at Acts 2: 37. Here we find Peter before a large congregation, preaching a remarkable sermon, which took effect, pricking them in the heart (not tickling their ears). It led them to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer is ready: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." In the 41st verse we read, "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."



Sceptical minds have seen much difficulty in this passage, and turned and twisted it to make it serve another theory ; yet there is no difficulty in it. Could not eighty-one chosen and commissioned disciples baptize thirty-eight converts each in half a day ? This would make over three thousand. But it does not read so as to require this supposition that they were all baptized in one day. It simply says, after the declaration that they who believed followed Peter's advice, " And the same day there were added unto them (the number of believers) about three thousand souls." Yet they might have been all baptized in the same day, as any real Christian was then considered suitable to baptize converts, and the command to be baptized was in those days immediately obeyed.

Let us next visit the city of Samaria (Acts 8 : 5-12), when Philip is preaching there. That people had been bewitched by one Simon. " But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." It took those who believed. There is no pleading of not *feeling* it duty, or being unworthy to obey the Lord, mentioned here.

We will now follow Philip out of this city, down the public road towards Gaza, and step with him into the royal chariot of the Queen of Ethiopia ; for the Spirit bids him go there. Ah ! a black man conducts the chariot. He is able to read, and is allowed to have the book of Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, — seems disposed to study, — shows a desire for knowledge, as black as he is, — is humble enough to confess his ignorance, —

asks for light. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." — Acts 8: 26-36. The truth enters his heart while they journeyed. And the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."

We will now find Peter at the house of Cornelius where an assembly is collected to hear all things commanded Peter of God. — Acts 10: 9-48. After an old-fashioned, powerful sermon, accompanied by the Holy Ghost, the people are found to be under conviction of the truth of the gospel of Christ. Then Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." In all these instances we see that the apostles acted in accordance with the commission which Christ gave them. Better would it have been for the church had all its servants done the same.

But let us look still farther. We will go to the city of Damascus, and examine the case of a man smitten with blindness. God in his wonderful workings has arrested an enemy of Christ, and "taken away his sight for a season." — Acts 9: 3, 18. And as he begins to pray, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" he is shown that Jesus is the Christ, and he believes it.

God calls on one Ananias, a disciple of Jesus, and commissions him to go down to the street Straight, to



the house of Judas, and inquire for one called Saul of Tarsus, for, behold, he prayeth. Ananias finds the penitent sinner, lays his hand on him, delivers the message of God to him, a part of which was, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." — Acts 22 : 16. "And he received his sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." No delay here.

Let us look after Paul a little since meeting with this mighty change of faith and conduct. He soon became so bold for Christ that the civil authorities thought best to put him in jail, in the city of Thyatira, where Lydia, one of their fancy-goods dealers, had believed his message and been baptized. — Acts 16 : 14-23. Think of it, ye delicate, fastidious, high-headed women, who think it indecent for a lady to be baptized. Sure enough there were some of your class in that city, and the baptizing of Lydia made a stir among the wearers of purple. Had it been some poor servant-girl, or washerwoman, who had believed Paul's preaching, and gone into the water to give a sign of her faith, it would have passed off with a little social gossip in high circles. Or had this leading lady of fashion stifled her convictions of gospel truth, so that her patrons and friends could see no change in her life and conversation, no uproar would have followed. She might have sent a polite note to Paul and Silas, desirous to have their prayers for herself and family, and so pursued her business in quiet, and also without being baptized.

But the Lord had a hand in this case, and "opened her heart, that she *attended unto* the things which were



spoken of Paul," and her household also. This led her and her family into the water, and they were "baptized" at once. Obedience made her "bold in the faith," and she constrained these two outcasts from society to make her house their home. This brought them in contact with "a certain damsel," — a spirit-medium, "and who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying." Like the modern spirit-medium mistresses, she had several "masters."

Here is a case worthy of special notice. The devil tries his skill to bring the gospel into reproach, with its ministers also, and so destroy their influence in that city. To do this he sets the noted "damsel" (whose character and influence were such as to fasten suspicion of corruption on any who associated with her) to testifying for the truth in the public streets, where all knew her character. But here the devil failed; for as his medium cried out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation," Paul calls on Jesus Christ to cast the spirit out of her; "and he came out the same hour." The devil's gospel preacher was silenced, and those adulterers, her masters, were mad; and having much favor with "the rulers" — a very common occurrence, — (Acts 16: 16-24), they got Paul and Silas into jail, in close confinement.

Here is another effort of the devil to bring the gospel into disrepute. Would any respectable people believe that a message came from God, which was preached by jailbirds? How must Lydia and her friends feel now, when meeting those accustomed to

buy her "purple," and seek her advice on fashions? We can imagine them musing thus: "These dupes of fanaticism led away by those vagabond Hebrews! They palmed themselves off as servants of God, but they are caught at last, and secured in the inner prison!" So the gay and proud might have reasoned. But hark! At midnight, "Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed," breaking the slumbers of the jail-keeper, and alarming him for the safety of his prisoners.

What is the cause of these wonders? Ah! "The Defender of the faith" had undertaken to vindicate the action of the believers, and had assumed the office of turnkey, liberating his faithful servants, who meekly accepted their freedom.

This worked conviction on the jailer. He had a hard case to consider. God and two of his humble servants stood on one side—free, yet not attempting to run; his reputation, office, oath, yea, and his life, on the other side. What shall he do? A life of more value than his mortal life was at stake. All at once he is made to feel that he is a sinner, and that some action must be taken. He decided in a moment to do something, "and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They readily replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the

night, and washed their stripes (for they had been whipped and their stripes neglected), and was *baptized*, he and all his straightway." — Acts 16: 29, 34. Singular work for a jailer! But God was in it. The gospel was so preached that the jailer and his household could exercise a *feeling* belief which led them into the water at once.

Here again the devil is defeated. The apostles are honorably discharged, their character vindicated, new converts made and baptized; the magistrates are affrighted by God's earthquake, and entreat the apostles to leave jail. Thus the jailer is shielded and protected from the civil law by that God who has pledged himself to sustain all who put their trust in him. Lydia gets another visit from Paul and Silas, and is comforted and confirmed in the unpopular position she had taken, while the aristocracy of that city had a gloomy topic to talk over for a while.

Let us now follow Paul to Corinth, and perhaps we may learn still more on this subject. Paul goes to work with one Aquila, making tents. He also "reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks: . . . and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ." — Acts 18: 1-8. But this working minister troubled the people. Yet "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

Here the same results followed faith in Christ, — they were immediately baptized. The apostles "taught them to observe all things Christ had commanded," and believers obeyed.



But some will quote what Paul said in 1 Cor. 1: 17, — “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” Such should remember that Paul admits that he baptized “Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas ; besides, I know not whether I have baptized any other.”

Still, the objector urges, “Paul thanked God that he never baptized any others.” No, sir ; you don’t read correctly. Paul never said all that. He may have baptized a thousand others ; there is no evidence to the contrary. He says to those Corinthian Paulites, Apollosites, and Cephasites, who had lost the Spirit, and began to indulge in “preferring one” minister “before another,” — “I thank God I baptized none of *you*, but Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, lest any should say I had baptized in mine own name.”

Paul was ashamed of the contending, party disciples, for they were a reproach to the cause ; and he was thankful that he had baptized but few of them at Corinth. He then alludes to the fact that the burden of his commission from Christ was to preach the gospel. — Acts 22: 14–21. The other apostles were already commissioned, not only to preach the gospel, but to baptize also, and there is evidence enough that Paul baptized believers whenever he found them ready to obey. That he thought much of baptism, as an ordinance in the church, we have shown before in this work.

We have heard the testimony of John, and seen the example of Christ. We have examined also the commission which Christ gave his apostles to preach and

baptize. From these we have turned to the apostles to see how they understood and practised. In all these we hear but one continued voice, and this asserts the duty of every one, who accepts Christ as a Saviour, to be baptized in his name. That baptism is seen to be water baptism, and the time to attend to that duty is seen to be immediately after believing in Christ.

All cavilling, or sophistry, or scepticism cannot do it away. If rejected, it must be by real infidelity, which discredits all Scripture. If neglected, it must eclipse the faith, lessen the hope, and condemn the heart of those who neglect; and this opens the way for further disobedience, and final apostasy. There is abundant evidence that there are thousands upon thousands of persons around us, and in our midst, who have lost their first love for Christ, wandered in doubt and darkness (many of them entirely apostatized), by neglecting or rejecting the duty and cross of baptism.

Let me exhort and entreat you, dear reader, who have neglected this duty, to neglect it no longer. "Arise, and be baptized." Confer with flesh and blood no longer. Probably you have pondered over it until the devil has reasoned you nearly out of Christianity. God's blessing always attends obedience. Let your heart respond to his command, and go forward in the path of duty; then you will "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth;" become "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

And you, who have just seen your need of Christ as a Saviour, and determined to trust in his atoning blood for the forgiveness of your sins, and in his resurrection

for eternal life, go forward, confessing your faith by "being buried with Christ by baptism" at once. It will give you strength to do other duties in the Lord's vineyard.

But here the question may arise in the minds of those who have not carefully read their Bibles, to learn on this subject,

#### WHICH IS THE RIGHT MODE?

This question is quite proper to consider, since several forms are practised in the Christian church, each of which is called baptism. But the assertion, that "there are several modes of Christian baptism," is greatly in need of proof.

We shall here meet a host of honest minds who will say, "I was baptized in infancy." Indeed; and are you sure of that? There is neither command nor example in the Bible for such baptism. In all our investigations of the Scriptures of truth you know we have seen that only believers are to be baptized.

Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Philip says to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Peter says, "Repent and be baptized." Again, "Eight souls were saved by water (in the ark); the like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." — 1 Pet. 3: 21.

Baptized in infancy? Did you believe in Christ then? Did you repent then? Did you know any-



thing about "a good conscience toward God" when an infant? You are now conscious that you knew nothing of these matters then.

Doubtless you have been told since you became old enough to be taught, that baptism is the antitype of circumcision; and, if this were true, sprinkling male infants might meet the type. In that case all female infants and adults are excluded from the rite of baptism. But this is an erroneous idea. Paul tells us what is the antitype of circumcision, in Rom. 2: 28, 29: "Neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; . . . and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter." Again, Col. 2: 11, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."

This then was a sign of death borne by the male children of Israel, and of the work of God on the heart of all Christians by the Spirit, making "a new creature." It was not a sign of a sign, or type of a type. It was a type of something real; and we have shown that baptism is also a type of real death and resurrection, and capable of being borne by all believers.

For the benefit of many who are misled, and wish information on the subject of

#### INFANT BAPTISM,

we will now devote some space to show how it came into practice, and what are its claims.

That all efforts of the most able writers on this sub-

ject have failed to show that the Bible teaches any such doctrine, is most evident from the unnatural and unwarranted inferences drawn from certain texts having no reference to baptism, in the absence of all other proof. Their only show of proof that infant baptism is valid, is derived from the records of history of early times.

We readily admit that there is clear and decided testimony that infants were baptized in the primitive church; but then the same records of customs of primitive times show that all minors, that is, all persons less than twenty-five years in some countries, and eighteen years in others, were called "infants;" consequently all infants thus mentioned as baptized, *could* be believers. The wisdom or prudence of those who quote such testimony from primitive writers to justify the baptizing of what we now call infants, is not to be coveted by any sincere Christian minister.

But that the time came when the church did baptize *young* infants is true indeed, yet it was immersion for many years, and nothing else, as we shall show.

Curcellus remarks, —

"Baptism was performed by plunging the whole body into water, and not by sprinkling a few drops, as is now the practice. For John was baptizing in Enon, near Salim, because there was much water. I am, therefore, of opinion that we should endeavor to restore and introduce this primitive rite of immersing. \* \* \* They are now ridiculed who desire to be baptized as it was performed by the ancient church, by the immersion of the whole body in water." —  
RELIGION OF CHRIST, INST. L.

*Edinburgh Encyclopedia, —*

“In the time of the Apostles the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or vessel, with the words which Christ had ordained.

“The immersion of the whole body was omitted only in cases of the sick who could not leave their bed. In this case, sprinkling was substituted, which was called clinic baptism. The Greek church, as well as the Schismatics in the east, retain the custom of immersing the whole body; but the western church adopted, in the thirteenth century, the mode of sprinkling.” — DEBATE OF C. AND R., p. 183.

Dr. Wall, although an advocate for sprinkling, makes the following confession, —

“The primitive Christians’ general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it was an infant, or grown man or woman, into the water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such PEDOBAPTISTS as would maintain the negative of it.” — HIST. OF INFANT BAPT., p. 462.

F. Brenner, —

“Thirteen hundred years was baptism *generally* and *ordinarily* performed by the IMMERSION of a man UNDER WATER, and only in *extraordinary* cases was sprinkling *permitted*. This latter method was *called in question*, and even PROHIBITED.” — STUART ON BAPT., p. 152.

Thus we learn that whoever were led to observe the rite of baptism as a Christian duty, or to consecrate their children, during the first thirteen hundred years, did so by immersion in water.



You should carefully examine this subject for yourselves. The true history of the act of Christian baptism is clearly stated in the New Testament; and by it you should be governed. Do not allow yourselves to be blinded by the efforts of those who try to show that babes must have been baptized because Christ blessed them, and said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" or because the families of some converts to Christ, whose names are mentioned, are said to have been baptized also with their parents; or because they reason that there was not water enough in the jail, or at the house of Cornelius, and other places in Jerusalem, and out of it, to have immersed the candidates said to be baptized; for there were many pools, and places of bathing, both public and private property, in Jerusalem, and in all that country. Neither should you be persuaded to think that the "three thousand," converted by the preaching of Peter, must have been sprinkled, since history informs us that much greater numbers have been immersed in one day, at one place.

Bingham, —

"Palladius observes, in the life of St. Chrysostom, that at Constantinople three thousand persons were baptized at once, upon one of their great festivals." — ORIGIN ECCLES. B. XI.

Mr. Merchant says, —

"Baptizing in one day three thousand by immersion, need not be wondered at, since we read in the authentic life of Gregory, the Apostle of the Armenians, that he baptized

TWELVE THOUSAND together, by immersion, in the river Euphrates." — EXPOSITION ON MATT. 3.

Dr. J. G. King, —

"Wolodimes, a Russian prince, was baptized by the name of Basilius, and it is said twenty thousand of his subjects were baptized the same day." — RITES AND CEREM.

"One baptistry was prepared for the baptism of Clovis, King of France, and his majesty, with three thousand of his subjects, were plunged on Christmas day, A. D., 496." — MEZERAY, FRENCH HISTORY, p. 15.

Shall we deny these historical statements, because they do not detail all the circumstances, — do not tell us the number who aided in the action? They are doubtless facts, and these were not sprinkled, but immersed. The Greek Church, and all others in the East, obey Christ in immersion, if in nothing else.

"In the Eastern churches," says Dr. King, "baptism has been *universally* administered by *DIPPING from the first introduction of it to this day.*" — DR. KING'S RITES OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

Having at this point introduced the above testimony on the action of attending to the rite of baptism, and proved it to be immersion for thirteen hundred years, whether adults or babes, we will now examine the evidence on the

#### BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

Many and great errors are often made by not critically examining the words used, and the uses of words by which facts are stated in the Bible, and in history. For this reason, we are often asked, "Why were the

household of the jailer baptized, ~~when~~ he was, if young children are not subjects for baptism?" We reply, Because they all believed in Christ. See Acts 16: 34. Why were the household of Lydia baptized? Because they were old enough to believe, and be "brethren." — Acts 16: 40. Why were the household of Stephanas baptized by Paul? They were baptized because they were believers, and "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." See 1 Cor. 16: 15. It is clearly shown that all who were baptized in these cases were believers. The remark is often boldly made that history proves that the early church baptized young children. Instance the following, quoted from Milner's Church History, —

"The whole church of Christ has constantly held that infants were baptized." — THE BAPTIZED CHILD, p. 186.

The above is very direct and positive, especially when followed up, by the Rev. Mr. N. Adams, with eloquent talk about "unequivocal assertions of history and tradition proving infant baptism," which he applies to mean young babes.

But when we turn to another page of history, this matter assumes a different color. These "infants" and "babes" were often twelve, or fifteen, or twenty-four years of age. They were *minors*. "Law fixed the periods of infants (minors) in the Roman Empire, after its division into Eastern and Western. The laws of the Vandals, Goths, Lombards, Franks, Burgundians, and Saxons, for infants (minors), were from eighteen years in some, to twenty-five years of age in others. Bishop Victor says, —



“There were in the African Church at Carthage, when Eugenius was bishop, a great many little infants, readers, who rejoiced in the Lord, and suffered persecution with the rest of their brethren.” — VICTORIS VITENSIS HIST. PERSECUTION.

“The Greek word (infant) signifies a *minor*, and is used in all their histories, literature, and legal titles, to embrace all from a day old to twenty-five years.” — See HIST. LITERATURE DE LA FRANCE. FLEETWOOD’S INSCRIP. ANTIQ.

The above shows how history can state that infants were baptized, and yet be believers.

“Some of these infants, called in Eastern language babes, are proved to be six and eight years old, others twelve to twenty years old.” — ANNIBAL FABROTI, Paris, 1647.

But we have admitted that the time came when the church did baptize young infants, and we will show how it came into practice.

#### BAPTISM OF BABES.

Besides the union of Platonic trinity with Jewish Scriptures, there was another doctrine of Plato, — the preëxistence of human souls, — incorporated with Jewish theology, and taught in the school at Alexandria. See Wisdom, chap. 8 : 19, 20. It was supposed that the state of the soul was far more noble prior to its birth into this world, and having sinned, it was sent here to be punished. Edward Beecher, D. D., teaches similarly. See CONFLICT OF AGES. It is evident that some Jews had adopted this notion in Christ’s day, from their question, “Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents?” John 9 : 1.

Next to this idea was that of water baptism being the new birth.

“It was early conceived and expounded by the church, that the text ‘Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,’ referred to water baptism; and finally the church of Rome argued as a consequence that no person could be saved without being baptized in water. All Pagans inevitably perished. All infants dying without baptism, were in the same condition.”  
—MABILLON: ANNALS, ORDINANCES.

Many adopted the doctrine of Austin, that

“The whole race of man, in new-born infancy, were under the sentence of eternal damnation; in case of natural death, it was impossible for one to escape, unless some compassionate soul should dip him in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

“The baptism of young children was first practised by a small, obscure sect of Gnostics, called Cainites or Gainites.

“Gnosticism rose out of Oriental philosophy, and even in the times of the apostles perverted many from the simplicity of the Gospel. See 2 Cor. 11: 2, 4; 1 John 2: 18, 19, and 4: 1–3. These were Gnostics. They held to a great variety of doctrines. All classes much perplexed the subject of baptism by affecting sublime and spiritual explanations of it.

“One party dipped them; one party mixed water with oil, and initiated converts by an effusion; some pronounced a set of barbarous words at the administration; others baptized ‘in the name of the unknown father of all, and of truth, the mother of all;’ while some, affecting a superior way of thinking, wholly omitted it. One of their principal tenets

was, that rational souls were defiled by matter, consequently they practised baptizing children as soon as they could ask to be baptized."—IRENEI, ADV. HERES.

In this mass of corrupt notions, many living in our day can (if they will look) readily see the origin of the notions of Edward Beecher, D. D., and also of their own.

"Against such baptisms (as is stated above) Tertullian wrote, and he argued the innocence of children as one principal reason why they ought not to be admitted to partake of an institution appointed for the remission of sins.

"By slow degrees the doctrine of original defilement crept into the Catholic church, and after it followed its never-failing attendant, the baptism of children,—checked, however, and qualified by express declarations that it was admissible only in cases of apparent danger of death.

"In the annals of mankind the history of Gnosticism exhibits a remarkable display of the wonderful versatility of error. Doctrines and ceremonies applied to them, which the primitive Christians considered with horror, in process of time became the very essentials of Christianity with their pretended successors; and magic sounds of metaphysical ideas, airy nothings, assume a local habitation and a name."—HIST. OF BAPTISM, p. 248.

The baptism of young babes was first brought into public notice in the Catholic church at the close of the fourth century, by Gregory Nazianzen. In A. D. 381, Gregory, then Bishop of Constantinople, delivered his fortieth oration, in which he gives his *opinion* on infant (little babes) baptism. Hear him.



“But some say, What is your opinion of infants, who are not capable of judging either of the grace of baptism, or of the danger sustained by the want of it? *Shall we baptize them, too?* By all means, if there be any apparent danger of death; for it were better that they were sanctified without their knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed and initiated.

“As for others, I give my opinion that when they are three years old, or thereabouts (for then they are able to hear and answer some of the mystical words of the catechism, and although they do not fully understand, they may receive impressions), they may be sanctified, soul and body, by the great mystery of the initiation.” — HIST. OF BAPTISM, p. 250

By the above we learn that the notion of baptizing little children was of very doubtful character up to A. D. 381, and then had no better foundation to sustain it than a man's opinion, — built on “Mystery,” by a priest of that fallen church, which is called “Mystery, Babylon the great.” Rev. 17.

It seems to be in place here to turn your attention to an important admission of the Rev. F. G. Hibbard, a Methodist divine, of high repute in that church, who, in a recent and labored work of over five hundred and fifty pages to prove that infant baptism is valid, says, —

“Objections to infant baptism are everywhere thrown from the pulpit and the press before the minds of young Christians, where they have not learned to meet and obviate. . . . The force of the argument (for infant baptism) does not lie embodied in terse, isolated passages, which require but a single effort of the mind to comprehend them,

and which leave upon the mind, with scarcely an effort of its own, the lively image of an intuitive conviction.

“A *process of reasoning* must be gone through, a somewhat extended range of observation must be brought immediately under the eye of the mind.” — HIBBARD ON BAPTISM, PREFACE, p. 5.

This candid admission of one of the most able advocates for baptizing, or properly, for sprinkling, babes, fully justifies its devotees in writing their lengthy “processes of reasoning,” and immense numbers of books of enormous size have come forth to reason out the “mystery,” so as to produce “conviction on the mind.” This “mystery” has caused Drs. Wall and Gale to write more than two thousand pages octavo, mainly on the subject of church history, and tradition for sprinkling babes.

But the necessity for such a “process” should lead all thoughtful persons to suspect the soundness of their conclusions. God’s commands are plain. The elaborate Dr. Wall bases his entire argument for infant baptism on the Jews’ proselyte baptism, when there was no such thing, as we have clearly shown by the testimony of Dr. Benson and others.

Mr. Hibbard’s book, also, of over five hundred pages, is filled with “reasonings” so foreign from the subject of baptism, as to make the reader almost willing to admit any conclusions asked for, that he may be able to dismiss such mysterious searchings, and refresh his mind with a few of those “passages which require but a single effort of the mind to comprehend them,” on the subject of Christian baptism.

In the middle of the tenth century, Atto, a bishop of Vercelli, a man of merit, who abhorred the vices of his times, and took pains to reform his diocese, wrote a code of church law, consisting of one hundred canons. In it we read, —

“It is enacted, that no person shall be baptized unless he can say by heart the creed, and the Lord’s prayer. But if any Catholics desire to baptize such as cannot speak, and if they will answer for them, — negatively, we will not refuse to baptize them, — positively, we will wink at it.” — UGHELLI, ITAL. SAC., Tom. iv.

“The truth is,” says the historian, “the clergy were become so wicked, Atto, Abbo, and other sober bishops were obliged to indulge them,” and “wink at it.”

An officer in the church of Milan wrote to Atto to inquire into the institution of the office of deaconesses. Atto replied, —

“They had been appointed formerly for the purpose of baptizing women. Now, indeed, they were not allowed to baptize, because the custom of baptizing little ones had rendered the service unnecessary; for there is nothing in the nakedness of female children offensive to modesty.” — MURAT ANTIQ. ITALY.

Let the reader keep in mind, that, although we have arrived in our historical journey at a time when they baptized babes, yet it was immersion, and not sprinkling at all at that time.

Mabillon, in his book, says, —



“Although mention is made in the life of S. Lindger of baptizing a little infant by pouring on holy water, yet it was contrary to an express canon of the ninth century; contrary to a canon given by Stephen, which allowed pouring only in cases of necessity; contrary to the general practice in France; contrary to the practice in Spain; contrary to the opinion of Alwin, who contended for trine (dipping three times) immersion.” — MABILLON, ORD. BENEDI. CT.

This man gives citations from various works for authority for what he says.

Dr. Joseph De Viccomes, whose book passed a thorough examination, and was approved by the college of St. Ambrose, says, —

“I will never cease to profess and teach, that only immersion in water, except in cases of necessity, is lawful baptism in the church. I will refute that false notion, that baptism was administered in the primitive church by pouring or sprinkling.” — Book 4, Chap. 6.

#### ANOTHER MOTIVE FOR BAPTIZING CHILDREN.

“From the eighth to the tenth centuries the church and priests became so corrupt that the priests were the fathers of thousands of (illegitimate) children, and these children must be supported by the church, and receive shares of church property.” — HIST. BAPT., pp. 306, 309.

It should be remembered by the reader that all church conduct was in that time governed by the laws of State.

“Children could not be recognized by the church, nor inherit property by law until they were baptized. Minors

could not be pensated until baptized ; could not be treated as responsible beings according to law until baptized. This law prevailed all over the Catholic world.

“Also the practice prevailed by the corruptions of the priests, to furnish priest’s orders in infancy, and they were elected priests before they knew anything, and the law required that they must be first baptized. This abuse went so far that Queen Elizabeth of England put an injunction on babes being made priests.” — See INJUNCTION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, A. D. 1559.

Dr. Robinson, in his critical work on the subject of baptism, says, “There is no trace of the baptism of babes among the Spanish Catholics, until A. D. 517. So say others.

“In this year (517), seven bishops met at Girona, a city in Spain. They were so obscure that little is known of them except their names. It was an irregular council of a clique of low, illiterate, mongrel sort of African Jewish Christian vagabond priests.

“They made canons regulating the feasts of the Passover and Pentecost, the keeping of the Sabbath, and requiring the immersion of babes.

“They were able to write, but not able to compose articles properly. Thus we have the beginning of babe baptism in Europe, introduced by seven such bishops, without the countenance or knowledge of their superior neighboring bishops in the province where they met.” — D. NICOLAI ANTONII, Lib. 6, Chap. 1.

St. Augustine, who was a debauchee of exceeding base and brutal character, as history abundantly shows, did much to establish infant baptism in Europe ; while

Cyprian, whom history calls a tyrant and a fighting man, helped infant baptism into Africa.

Immersion was the ordinary mode among the Catholics up to the time of Luther. The evidence is beyond all contradiction. Canons, manuals, legends, histories, and homilies describe it in words; and monuments, baptistries and pictures in missals describe it in sculpture and paintings; Luther and other reformers continued it, as the Scriptures and intention of the ordinance teach that they should do.

Luther translates in his New Testament the Greek word *baptizo* by the German *taufen*, and in his works expressly declares, "that the verb *taufen* signifies *immerse*, or *plunging into water*." — OP. DE BAPTISM, DAS NEW TEST.

One more testimony on this point.

"Baptism was *universally* performed by IMMERSION for the first thirteen hundred years after Christ, and from then till after the reformation it was *generally* so performed. Pouring and sprinkling began to be allowed for baptism only in cases of necessity. In England, sprinkling was never declared valid, ordinary baptism, till the assembly of divines in the time of Cromwell, influenced by Dr. Lightfoot, pronounced it so." — MARTINI GERBENTI.

But we admit that during the last part of this time they did baptize little babes; and, as before stated and shown, it was the doctrine of original sin, and the new birth being water baptism, as embraced and taught by the church, which led them to do it that their children might be saved.



This doctrine had been long growing, and in the reign of Charlemagne it came to maturity. During his reign the law of baptism in his empire was exceedingly severe.

“It was death for a man to refuse to be baptized. Public baptisms were administered only at Easter and Whitsuntide (twice a year), and a heavy fine was laid on the parent who, except he had a license from the priest, omitted the baptism of his child within the year.

“Private baptisms were allowed only in cases of necessity, and baptism was defined immersion, single or trine. Alwin, the emperor’s prime ecclesiastic, contended warmly for trine immersion; but some priests practised the Roman mode, and dipped only once.

“The absolute necessity of dipping in order to a valid baptism, and the indispensable necessity of baptism in order to salvation, were two doctrines which clashed; and the collision kindled a war between the warm bosoms of parents who had children, and the cold reasonings of monks who had few sympathies.

“The doctrine was cruel, and the feelings of humanity revolted against it. The clergy felt the inconvenience of this state of things, for they were obliged to attend, . . . at a moment’s warning, night or day, . . . wherever the necessity of a case demanded baptism (in cases of births, sickness, and deaths), and if they neglected their duty they were severely punished.

“A great many expedients were tried to remedy this evil. At first, infants were baptized with adults on the two appointed days in the year; but it was found that some died before the time of baptism came. Then priests were empowered to baptize at any season, and any place, in case

of sickness. But priests were not always at hand. Then new canons were made, empowering priests to depute others to perform this duty, and midwives were licensed to do it. It then sometimes happened that mothers were neglected by this law. To prevent such accidents in future it was decreed that anybody, licensed or unlicensed, a Jew or a degraded priest, scullion or felon, might baptize. Indeed, it became impossible to maintain the two positions, — that baptism was dipping, and that children could not be saved without being baptized.” — HIST. BAPTISM.

#### POURING INTRODUCED.

Pouring was introduced into the church as a preparatory step for baptism, but was a distinct ceremony at first, and finally was called baptism.

“In the spring of A. D. 754, Pope Stephen III., while an exile in France, under the protection of Pepin, just elected king, in answer to some monks of Cressy, in Brittany, gave his opinion on nineteen questions, one of which is allowed to be the first authentic law for administering baptism by pouring, which in time was interpreted to signify sprinkling.” — JACOB SIMMONS.

“The question was proposed, whether it was lawful, in case of necessity, occasioned by illness of an infant, to baptize by pouring water out of the hand or a cup on the head of the infant. Stephen answered, ‘If such a baptism were performed, *in such a case of necessity*, in the name of the holy trinity, it should be held valid.’” — LIBBENS, UT SUP.

There is much history to show how pouring was practised; and the practice increased until we arrive to where this was changed for

## SPRINKLING.

Sprinkling of children is neither of Jewish nor of Christian origin, nor is it a late institution. If candid and conscientious Christians will but begin to doubt the correctness of the "traditions of the elders," and turn their attention to an earnest search for the origin of infant sprinkling, they would find facts enough to make them blush to know that their parents and themselves had been so carefully scrupulous to practise as a *Christian duty* what the primitive Christians looked upon with abhorrence and disgust.

"Infant sprinkling is an article of Pagan mythology, and it is traced by antiquities from monument to monument, on Roman and Etruscan remains, until it hides itself in the depths of the most remote antiquity.

"Among the pagans it was *lustration* (purifying by water). When it first appeared in the Christian church, it was under the name of *exorcism*. ('The expulsion of evil spirits from persons or places by certain adjurations and ceremonies.' — *Webster*.)

"When the monks united exorcism with baptism, it became baptism itself, and in the end it came forward to supply the place of it," (in their estimation.) — GORI MUSCUM ETRUSCUM.

The pagan idea was to cleanse by water, while the corrupted Christian idea was to expel evil spirits by water. But Christ's doctrine is, that we are cleansed by his atoning blood. The learned Gerbert says, —

"It was the doctrine of original sin that first brought forward lustral water to expel Satan.



“In cases of adults, lustral water, sprinkled in exorcism, was at a considerable distance from the act of baptism; in cases of necessity it was brought near, — as at the baptism of sick, consumptive, and dying. Hence came the services in ancient rituals which are entitled, ‘For the Succor of Sick,’ and ‘For Baptism of Sick,’ not for infants.” — GERBERT, VET. Chap. 1, Sect. 19.

The administration of sprinkling (the pagan rite) for baptism was strongly opposed by the primitive church, when attempted by pagan converts.

“It was first applied in Africa, in the third century, to bed-ridden people; but even the African Catholics, the least enlightened, and the most depraved of all Catholics, derided it, and reported it no baptism.” — JO. ANDREE BOSI.

#### LUSTRAL WATER.

The Greek pagans lustrated their infants by sprinkling on the fifth day after their birth. The Roman pagans performed the ceremony on females on the eighth day, and on males the ninth. The infant was carried to the temple of the gods, and lustrated, and was considered initiated.

#### CHRISTIANS ABHORRED IT.

“The primitive Christians considered lustration with abhorrence: they deemed it a sort of magic: they preached and wrote against it; councils made canons, emperors issued edicts against it. Some say it was introduced into the Christian church by Alexander I., in the second century, but most likely it was introduced and first used in the sixth

century, as a complaisant accommodation to the prejudices of the pagans, and continued by convenience, till, in the end, the legislator was obliged to humor the popular taste, and holy water was enacted by law, and the use of it regulated by canons and rituals." — HIST. OF BAPT., p. 422.

The process was natural and easy, as in many other cases of apostasy.

"At *first*, vessels of water were placed in the avenues of the principal places of worship for cleanliness, — for persons to wash.

"*Second*, for thirsty Christians, who had come many miles out of the country to hear the divine word, to drink.

"*Finally*, it came to pass, that the priests must consecrate the water, and make it holy, and it must be made every Sunday morning, just before mass, with salt, crossings, prayers, and benedictions.

"It was no longer intended to wash persons for cleanliness, but to be applied to persons and things to keep off, expel, and drive away that mischievous fiend, — Satan. By order of the Emperor Charlemagne, this water was to be carried about every Sunday through the church, and many canons directed the application of it to various devout and expiatory uses.

"Dissenters used to call the spargill (sprinkler) the key of hell, which opened a door to admit innumerable errors and vices." — HIST. OF BAPT., p. 424.

The following item of history confirms the statement that sprinkling in the church is an institution of pagan lustration.

"No remark is more common among Catholic writers

that 'there is a striking resemblance between baptism in their church, and lustration as practised by pagans;' hence they often call baptism lustration." — LUDOVICI PRATEL.

This perversion of the original well-intended use of water for cleanliness and thirst, has at length led not only to the sprinkling of babes and adults for baptism, but at Rome the priests sprinkle horses, carriages, cattle, houses, lands, and various other equipage and property of Catholics, to keep off the Devil, and preserve from diseases and other calamities.

"Catholics give wonderful accounts of its virtues. If Satan rioted in a high wind, holy water drove him away, and the tottering buildings stand erect. Locusts fled before it. It cured cattle of murrain, preserved gardens from reptiles, birds, and flies. It healed all manner of diseases in the human body, and restored the distracted to their right mind; and, the greatest miracle of all, it produced a plentiful revenue. The obligations of England to it are very great, for when learning was at its lowest ebb, several humane bishops gave the sale of it for a perquisite to poor scholars, who carried it about country towns on festival days, disposed of it in streets, and villages, and farm-houses, to sprinkle men, women, children, houses, beds, books, cattle, fruits, etc., and thus they defrayed the expense of their education." — See WILKINS, PECKHAM, and others.

#### THE PROCESS.

*First*, The doctrine of original sin was taught as polluting new-born babes, so that they are in danger of eternal damnation.

*Second*, To be born of water (John 3) was taught to be baptism.



*Third*, Baptismal water is believed to cleanse from sin, and regenerate the soul.

*Fourth*, A conscientious priest, being ordered (by his bishop) to preach the doctrine of original sin, and to baptize infants as a remedy, and a remedy so necessary, that if it be not applied, through his neglect, before the babe expires, the babe perishes, and he is accountable to God for the loss of it, he is led to inquire, When is the human frame first animated? When doth original sin first pollute? And what is to be done, in extreme case of sickness, with new-born infants?

It came to pass, in cases of expiring babes, that great despatch was needed, and when pure water could not be had to baptize a babe as soon as it was born, beer, juices of herbs, wines, etc., have been used, while the priests were compelled to omit most of the ceremony, to make sure both of expelling Satan, and of remitting sin.

#### SPRINKLING IN ENGLAND.

“The introduction of sprinkling instead of dipping, into the island of Great Britain, seems to have been done by such Scotch as were disciples of Calvin of Geneva, during the Marian persecution. A book was published at Geneva, in 1556, advocating sprinkling, and approved by John Calvin.

“At this time the established church and foreign Protestants in England practised trine immersion (dipping three times). A revolution in the Church, and civil war in the State which sent twelve thousand horse and seven thousand foot into Scotland, in five years succeeded in the establish-

ment of the book by law." — NEAL'S HIST. OF THE BRIT-  
ONS.

Thus we see it cost a mighty struggle and much blood to force this spurious dogma into the church in England and Scotland, although they had departed widely from the simplicity of the gospel in many other points.

The contest was long and severe before the ministry were pressed and flattered into it, or made to yield to it. In this contest Dr. Lightfoot played a conspicuous part. He was a man proverbial for changing the use of words. Says the eminent Dr. Robinson, "No learned man ever did more to render words equivocal, than Dr. Lightfoot. In the seventeenth century, in the assembly of divines, Dr. Lightfoot was the man who caused dipping to be excluded in England, and sprinkling declared sufficient." — See LIGHTFOOT'S LIFE IN BAYLE, REM. F.

When the assembly came to vote whether their new directory should instruct the minister to pour or sprinkle a child, they were divided, twenty-four to twenty-five. The next day, Dr. Lightfoot so changed the words as to read, "It is not only lawful, but sufficient, to pour or sprinkle;" and added, "that the minister is to use his own liberty and godly wisdom." — ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

Dr. Lightfoot then preached a sermon before the House of Commons, "and is said to have exhausted his Rabbinical store in endeavoring to prove that sprinkling was an apostolic practice." — See LIGHTFOOT'S SERMON BEFORE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, August 26, 1645.

During this time of innovation and revolution, there was a class of Christians in England called "Free-will men," and lastly, and improperly, "Anabaptists." These affirmed that children have no original sin, and that they ought not to be baptized. They believed in dipping believers, but not in sprinkling children.

The term Anabaptist was applied to them because they baptized those who had been sprinkled, because they considered them not baptized. Thus the appellation was a false one, for Anabaptism signifies re-baptism, and they believed in only one baptism.

#### THE USE OF WORDS.

In this great and long-continued effort to lead the church to leave the significant and apostolic custom of immersing believers according to the divine command, and to substitute sprinkling of believers and unbelievers in its stead, many and mighty struggles have been made to change and pervert the use of words and titles of things. Thus the word baptize has been worked upon, turned, and finally charged with having a double or triple meaning, signifying dipping, pouring, sprinkling; and multitudes have believed it to be so, without taking the trouble to ascertain the facts in the case. Says the learned and candid Dr. Benson, —

"What can be more absurd than to imagine that the doctrines or rules of practice which relate to man's everlasting salvation should be delivered in such ambiguous terms as to be capable of many meanings?" — BENSON'S ESSAY ON UNITY OF SENSE.



On the double meaning of words, Dr. Robinson pertinently remarks, "If there be a word in the New Testament of a determinate meaning, it is the word baptism; yet, by a course of sophistry, it is first made synonymous with washing, and then washing shall be proved synonymous with sprinkling, and then sprinkling shall be called baptism. Thus the book intended to instruct, shall be taught to perplex; the book in the world the most determinate, shall be rendered the most vague.

"The book, the credit of which is absolutely ruined if it admit of double meanings, shall, of all others, be rendered the most mysterious book in the world,—saying everything, and, of course, nothing, and proving nothing."

Let us now look at the

#### USE OF THE WORD BAPTISM.

We have already stated that many volumes have been written to tell the world the meaning of this word, yet there is a very short way to get at it, from far better authority than all the books and lexicons of modern type.

The word is confessed by all to be Greek, and it should be admitted that native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners. They have always understood the word to signify dipping, and therefore, from their first embracing Christianity to the present day, have always immersed for baptism, and do yet. This is authority which cannot be set aside. The Greek dissenters, who deny the doctrine of the

trinity, all immerse, either in the name of Christ, or into the death of Christ. — Rom. 6 : 4, 6.

Dr. Robinson, in his great work on baptism, gives the following criticisms on the word, and is sustained by very many of the most eminent scholars, being refuted by none.

“The English translators did not translate the word *baptizo*, and they acted wisely, for there is no one word in the English language which is an exact counterpart of the Greek word, as the New Testament uses it, containing the precise ideas of the Evangelist, neither less nor more. The excellency of the word is, that it contains two ideas (not a double meaning), inclusive of the whole doctrine of baptism.

“Baptism is a dyer’s word, and signifies to dip so as to color. Such as render the word dip, give one true idea, but the word stood for two, and one is wanting in this rendering.

“This defect is in the German Testament (Matt. 3 : 1), ‘In those days came John, *der tauffer*,’ — John, the dipper ; and the Dutch, ‘In those days came John, *een dooper*,’ — John, the dipper. This is true, but it is not the whole truth.

“The Saxon Testament adds another idea by naming the administrator ‘John, *se fullubtere*,’ — John, the fuller. The Icelandic language translates baptism *skirn*, — scouring. These convey two ideas, the one literal, — dipping ; the other figurative, — coloring ; a figure, however, expressive of a real fact, conferring a character, a moral hue, as dyers by dipping in a dyeing vat, a tint or color.” — HISTORY OF BAPTISM, p. 6.

The Syrians, the Armenians, the Persians, and all

Eastern Christians, have understood the Greek word *baptize* to signify *dipping*; and, agreeably to their own versions, they all, and always immerse believers.

Archbishop Cranmer, in catechism and in sermon, argues immersion, both in mode and in object.

Wm. Tyndale, the first translator of the Scriptures into the English language, says, —

“Plunging into the water signifies that we die and are buried with Christ as concerning the old life of sin, which is Adam, and the plunging out again signifies that we rise again with Christ in a new life.” — THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRISTIAN MEN.

#### TESTIMONY OF LEXICONS AND COMMENTARIES.

As we have stated above, the word baptize is Greek; the translators of our Bible did not translate it into English, and for the best of reasons. Donnegan, in his Greek Lexicon, defines it thus, —

“Baptizo — submerge; soak thoroughly; saturate.

“Baptos — immersed; dyed.

“Bapto — to dip; to plunge into water; to temper metals in water; to draw out of water; to sink deep, as a sinking ship; to overwhelm.”

I know it is said by those who sprinkle, that there are other uses and significations of the word, as “*washing*,” “*affrighted*,” etc. I am aware they quote Num. 19: 18; Heb. 9: 10; and Mark 7: 3, as proof that baptism refers to washings, bathings, dippings, etc., by and among the Jews. Even the learned Dr. Dod-



dridge quotes Num. 19: 19, 20, to prove that Jewish washing was baptism, and remarks, "It is strange to me that any should doubt of this when it is plain." But all this talk is easily seen, by careful thinkers, to be without force in this matter. Jesus settles all such authority for such baptisms in Mark 7: 7, 8, 9. Please turn and read it. We have before shown that there was no such thing as Jewish baptism as an ordinance. This same Dr. Doddridge makes the candid admission, when commenting on the words, "Buried with him by baptism," (Rom. 6): "It seems the part of candor to confess that here is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by immersion."

Chrysostom, Hom. 40, on 1 Cor. 1, says, —

"To be baptized, and submerge, then emerge, is a symbol of descent to the grave, and of ascent from it."

Gregory Nyssen says, —

"Coming into the water, the kindred element of earth, we hide ourselves in it, as the Saviour hid in the earth."

Bishop Hall says, —

"Ye are, in baptism, buried together with Christ, in respect of the mortification of your sins, represented by lying under the water, and in the same baptism ye rise up with him in newness of life, represented by your rising up out of the water again." — **HARD TEXTS, ON COL. 2.**

Archbishop Secker, —

"Burying, as it were, the person baptized in water, and raising him out again, without question, was anciently the

method, on account of which, Paul speaks of baptism as representing both the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ."

John Wesley, —

"Buried with him : " "alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." — NOTES ON ROM. 6.

Dr. Chalmers, —

"Jesus Christ, by death, underwent this sort of baptism, — even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation. In the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned an old life ; and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second, or new life, along the course of which it is our part to maintain a strenuous avoidance of that sin." — CHALMERS' LECT. ON ROM. 6.

Dr. A. Clark, —

"The baptism they received, they considered an emblem of the natural death and resurrection. . . . This doctrine Paul pointedly preached. — Rom. 6 : 3, 4, 5. As they received baptism as an emblem of death, in voluntarily going *under the water*, so they received it as an emblem of the resurrection unto eternal life, in coming up *out of the water*. Thus they are baptized for the dead, in perfect faith of the resurrection." — COM. ON 1 COR. 15 : 29.

Bishop Burnet, —

"They led them into the water, and with no other garments but what might cover nature, they at first laid them down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave. Then

they raised them up again, and clean garments were put on them, whence the phrases, '*buried with him by baptism into death*,' '*baptized into Christ's death*.'" — EXPOS. XXXIX. ARTICLES.

Schleusner, in his lexicon, says on baptism, —

"Those who were to be baptized were anciently immersed. Indeed, the three New Testament lexicographers, Schleusner, Wahl, and Bretschneider, *limit* baptism as a sacred ordinance to immersion." — HINTON, p. 56.

Zanchius, Professor of Divinity at Heidelberg, —

"'The proper signification of *baptizo* is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water.' Mr. De Courcy tells us the opinion of Zanchius is worth a thousand others." — BOOTH, p. 48.

Professor Stuart, although an advocate for sprinkling, admits that, —

"*Bapto* and *baptizo* mean to dip, plunge or immerse, into anything liquid."

"All lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed on this." — STUART BAP., p. 51.

This is a singular admission for a learned man who has published to the world that the word *baptizo* signifies to *wash*. But let us hear him again, and we shall see he has written some things, as have many others, to sustain the traditions of the elders, while in his own judgment he is convinced of what is true, —

"For myself, I cheerfully admit that *baptizo* in the New Testament, when applied to the rite of baptism, does in all



probability involve the idea that this rite was usually performed by immersion." — STUART ON BAP., p. 154.

Dr. Chalmers, professor of theology in the University of Edinburgh, —

"The original meaning of the word *baptism* is immersion.

"We doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostles' days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water." — LECTURES ON ROM. 6.

Casaubon, Greek Professor at Geneva, says, —

"This was the rite of baptism, that persons were plunged into the water, which the very word *baptizein*, sufficiently declares; which, as it does not signify *dunein*, — *to sink to the bottom and perish*, so, doubtless, it is not *epipolazein*, to swim on the surface.

"For these three words, *epipolazein*, *baptizein*, and *dunein*, are of different significations. Whence we understand that it was not without reason that some, long ago, insisted on the immersion of the whole body in the ceremony of baptism, for they urge the word *baptizein*, to baptize." — BOOTH, pp. 49, 55.

Let us hear from John Calvin, the man who endorsed, — if he did not write, — the book published at Geneva, advocating sprinkling for baptism, and who exerted his influence to persuade the church to adopt sprinkling for the rite. Notice his confession, —

"The very word *baptize*, however, signifies to *immerse*, and it is certain that IMMERSION WAS THE PRACTICE OF

THE ANCIENT CHURCH." — CALVIN'S INSTI., Vol. III. p. 343.

Dr. Whitby, —

"It being so expressly declared here (Rom. 6 : 4, and Col. 2 : 12) that we are *buried with Christ in baptism* by being buried under water, and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence, and this immersion being religiously observed *by all Christians* for thirteen centuries," &c. — WHITBY, NOTE ON ROM. 6 : 4.

Martin Luther, —

"*Baptism* is a Greek word, and may be translated immerse, as when we *immerse* something in water, that it may be *wholly covered*. And although it is almost wholly abolished, they ought, nevertheless, to be WHOLLY IMMERSED, and immediately drawn out, — for that the etymology of the word seems to demand.

"The Germans call baptism *tauff*, from depth, which in their language they call *teeff*, because it is proper that those who are baptized be *deeply immersed*.

"Baptism is nothing else with the word of God than IMERSION IN WATER." — LUTHER, OP., Vol. I. p. 336.

So argued the great reformer, on this point, although the error of sprinkling was so prevalent, and superstition so blind, he felt obliged to indulge the people in this matter, and allow them to sprinkle.

Melancthon, —

"Baptism is an entire action, to wit, a *dipping*, and pronouncing these words, 'I baptize thee,' " &c. — REMINGTON ON BAP., p. 8.

Dr. Neander, an eminent church historian, —

“There can be no doubt whatever that in primitive times it was performed by IMMERSION, to signify a complete immersion into the new principles of the divine life which was to be imparted by the Messiah.” — NEANDER’S LETTER TO JUDD.

Dr. J. M’Knight, an eminent Scotch divine and critic, —

“In baptism the baptized person is *buried under the water*, as one put to death with Christ on account of sin, in order that he may be strongly impressed with a sense of the malignity of sin, and excited to hate it as the greatest of evils.

“Moreover, in the same rite, the baptized person being raised up out of the water, after being washed, he is thereby taught that he shall be raised.

“Christ submitted to be baptized, that is, to be *buried under the water* by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection. In like manner, the baptism of believers is emblematical of their own death, burial, and resurrection.” — DISCOURSE ON COL. 2: 12.

Prof. Lange, —

“Baptism in the apostolic age was a proper baptism, — *the immersion of the body in water*. As Christ died, so we die (to sin) with him in baptism. The body is, as it were, buried under water, dead with Christ. The plunging under water represents death, and rising out of it the resurrection to a new life. A more striking symbol could not be chosen.” — LANGE, INFANT BAPT., p. 81.



Thomas Lawson, —

“Such as rantise, or sprinkle infants, have no command from Christ, nor example among the Apostles, nor primitive Christians, for so doing.

“The ceremony of John’s administration, according to divine institution, was by dipping, plunging, or overwhelming their bodies in water, as Scapula and Stephens, two great masters in the Greek tongue, testify, as also Grotius, Pasor, Vossius, Mincéus, Leigh, Casaubon, Bucer, Bullinger, Zanchy, Spanhemius, Rogers, Talor, Hammond, Calvin, Piscator, Aquinas, Scotus.

“As for sprinkling, the Greeks call it *rhantismos*, which I render *rhantism*, for it is as proper to call sprinkling *rhantism* as dipping *baptism*. This linguists cannot be ignorant of, that dipping and sprinkling are expressed by several words, both in Latin and Greek and Hebrew. ’Tis very evident, if sprinkling had been of divine institution, the Greeks had their *rhantismos*, but as dipping was the institution, they used *baptismos*, and so maintained the purity and propriety of the language.

“To sprinkle young or old, and call it baptism, is very incongruous, yea, as improper as to call a horse a cow, for *baptism signifies* DIPPING. However, *rhantism* hath entered into and among the professors of Christianity, and to gain the more acceptance ’tisc alled *baptism*.” — BAPT., pp. 118, 119.

George Whitehead, —

“Sprinkling infants I deny to be baptism, either in a proper or scriptural sense.

“For sprinkling is *rhantism*, and not *baptism*, coming of *rantizo*, i. e. *aspergo*, — to sprinkle, or to be sprinkled. — Hebrew 9 : 13, 19, compare with Hebrew 10 : 22, — *rantismos*, a besprinkling, and chap. 12 : 24, and 1 Pet. 1 : 2.

“But *baptizo* is to baptize, to plunge under water, to overwhelm. Wherefore I would not have these men offended at the word *rhantism*, it being as much English as the word baptism. And also *baptismous* is translated *washing*, i. e., of cups, pots, brazen vessels and tables. — MARK 7 : 4.

“Now if washing here should be taken in the common sense, clearly people used not to do it only by sprinkling some drops of water upon them, but by washing them clean. So that *rhantism* can be neither baptism nor washing in a true and proper sense.” — TRUTH PREVALENT, 9, p. 116.

Dr. G. Campbell, Principal of Marischal College, —

“The word *baptizein*, both in sacred authors and classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion.

“It is always construed suitable to this meaning.” — CAMPBELL, DISSERT., Vol. IV., pp. 24, 128.

To these extracts from the most competent persons to decide what is truth in this matter, we might add many hundreds of others; but a few more must suffice, and these will show the subterfuge resorted to by sprinklers.

#### LEXICOGRAPHERS.

The claim is set up by those who sprinkle, that lexicographers give several meanings to the words *baptizo*. Therefore they feel at liberty to understand it to have various meanings, and to perform the rite by various *modes*. This looks very plausible to the unlettered who have not examined the foundation of these state-

ments; but it is shown by good authority that there is not a lexicon to be found that was published during 1800 years since Christ, that says *baptizo* signifies to sprinkle or pour. Mr. Bailey, remarking upon this, says, —

“But as new customs introduced new significations of words, in process of time it admitted the idea of sprinkling, as in case of clinical baptism.”

Prof. Stuart has the honor attributed to him of claiming the discovery that *baptizo* might be rendered sprinkle.

Yet it is admitted that some of the lexicons give what they call a “figurative meaning,” and “secondary” meaning to the word. Such as do this show no authority for its use, either among the Jews or Greeks. It is a point or rule among linguists and lexicographers, that any definition given to a word must have clear examples of such use being made of it by the authors of the language; otherwise such definition must be discredited. For the legitimate business of a lexicographer is to give the meaning of words as understood by those who spoke and wrote the language. If they fail to give plain examples of such uses of definitions as they give, they are rejected.

Lexicographers are of two classes, Classic and New Testament. These all, without exception, give the primary or popular meaning of *baptizo* to be *immerse*, and they support this meaning by very many undisputable examples of its use. Should not this be evidence enough to forever settle this question?



“But,” say our sprinkling friends, “some of the lexicons have added a secondary meaning, — a ‘figurative’ meaning to the word *baptizo*.” But this needs examination. True, it is found that in some of their classifications they have associated the effects of immersion with the act itself. These effects are “to cleanse,” “to wash,” “to purify.” The Greeks did not use the word with reference to a religious rite, but in the common occurrences of life, as to dye, to bathe, to soak, to saturate, to cleanse by dipping in water, &c. Some of the lexicographers, in giving a secondary meaning, have spoken of its effects. But this should be kept distinct from the proper use of the word. They give no authority whatever from examples of such use of the word, and are therefore rejected.

“Some of the most learned of these lexicographers tell us why ‘to wash,’ ‘to cleanse,’ ‘to purify,’ are found at the end of some of the classifications. ‘Because a thing is usually dipped or immersed in water, that it may be washed, that it may be cleansed.’” We will give a few of the authorities that fully support the distinction we have shown between *baptizo* and its effects.

Schleusner says, —

“Properly, *baptizo* signifies I immerse, I dip, I immerse in water. 2d. It signifies, I wash, I cleanse by water, — because for the most part a thing must be dipped or plunged into water that it may be washed.

“Thus he gives the reason why *baptizo*, figuratively, means to wash, because it is frequently the *effect* of immersion.” — SCRIPTURAL ACTION OF BAPTISM, pp. 191,

We will quote a few others on the same point.

Beza, successor of Calvin, at Geneva, says, —

“Nor does *baptizo* signify to *wash*, except by consequence; for it properly signifies to immerse.”

Stokins, on the New Testament, says, —

“Tropically, and by a metalepsis, it means to wash, to cleanse, because a thing is usually dipped or immersed in water, that it may be washed, that it may be cleansed.”

These are good witnesses, especially because they are among those who have swerved from the primitive practice of immersion, and adopt sprinkling. But when called to testify for the truth, they give it clearly, though it is against themselves; because their scholastic reputation is at stake. Remember, when men put sprinkling for baptism, and quote lexicographers for the uses of the word *baptizo*, they quote its secondary and metaphorical significations.

This course of reasoning is found in the writings of Dr. Scott, Dr. Bogue, Dr. Owen, President Dwight, President Beecher, Dr. Miller, Dr. Peters, Dr. Clark, Dr. Doddridge, Revs. R. Watson, J. Wesley, F. G. Hibbard, Dr. Wall, and a large number of other eminent writers, who have labored under the cloud of Roman Catholic perversions and innovations of Christian doctrine and practice. While they admit the truth as to the *primary* meaning of the word *baptizo*, they are found trying to sustain sprinkling by quoting, as we have shown, *secondary* uses of the word, and by showing that the Catholics did sprinkle for baptism, — that “Novatian in the third century

was *poured around* with water on a sick bed," — that "a Roman soldier was baptized with a pitcher of water which was brought for that purpose," &c., &c.

We will now pause to listen to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Treverne, Bishop of Strasburg, while he administers to them a severe rebuke, —

"The word *baptizo*, employed by the evangelists, strictly conveys this signification (immersion) as the learned are agreed; at the head of them Casaubon, of all the Calvinists, the best versed in the Greek language."

"Now baptism by immersion has ceased for many ages, and you (Protestant clergy) yourselves, as well as we, have received it by infusion (sprinkling). It would, therefore, be all over with your baptism unless you established it by tradition and the practice of the (Roman) church. This being settled, I ask you from whom you have baptism (by sprinkling)? Is it not from the church of Rome? Do you not consider her as heretical, and even idolatrous? You cannot, then, according to the terms of Scripture, prove the validity of your baptism, (by sprinkling), and, to produce a plea for it, you are obliged to seek it with Pope Stephen and the councils of Arles and Nice, and in apostolic tradition." — LA DISCUSSION AMICALE, 1847.

The above is, of course, addressed to that portion of the Protestant church which has departed from the Scriptural doctrine, and command to baptize believers in Christ. It ought to be well considered by sprinklers.

PROTESTANT APOLOGY FOR CHANGE TO SPRINKLING.

Dr. Bogue, Calvinist, —

"As it is but a ritual observance, and quantity of water



can be of no efficacy, allowance is to be made for difference of climate and usages, as, if the mode by immersion be not agreeable to cold climates and decency, an alteration in mode is suitable." — BOGUE'S THEOLOG. LECT., p. 313.

Dr. Hill, —

"The greater part of Christians have found themselves at liberty, in a matter very far from being essential, to adopt that practice which is most convenient, and most suited to the habits of colder climates." — HILL'S DIVINITY, p. 659.

This is the kind of accommodating divinity (?) which has corrupted the church in many points.

Dr. Wetharn, after stating that the word baptism signifies immersion, says, —

"Not only the Catholic Church, but also the pretended reformed churches, have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water on the person baptized." — ANNO. N. T., MATT. 3 : 6.

Piscator, —

"Whether the whole body be dipped, and that thrice or once, or whether the water be only poured or sprinkled on the party, this ought to be free to the churches, according to the difference of countries." — APHOR. DOCT. CHRIST.

Richard Watson, a noted writer in the Methodist Episcopal Church, after making a great display of the secondary use of the word *baptizo*, admits he had not given the authority for such meaning, and says, —

"We have thought . . . the church at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water to the body, in the

name of the Trinity, in which the essence of the rite consists, to different climates and manners." — THEOLOGICAL INSTL., p. 445.

Stuart, Calvin, Baxter, Burnet, Perkins, and many others, present the same apology, showing how lightly they had been taught to esteem the sacred ordinances of Christ. I thank God that all Christian men have not been so blinded by false tradition on this point.

Bloomfield says, —

"I agree with Koppe and Rosenmuller, that there is reason to regret it (immersion) should have been abandoned in most Christian churches." — CRITICAL DIGEST ON ROM. 6 : 4.

Although the Catholic Church and many of the Protestant Churches have thus apostatized in this respect, it is gratifying to know that many others are steadfast in this rite according to the command of Christ. I would to God they were as true in all other things.

#### COLD CLIMATES NOT THE CAUSE.

Dr. Wall, whose elaborate work on infant baptism is well known to many, says, —

"All the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe practise immersion, in which third part of Europe are comprehended the Christians of Grecia, Thracia, Servia, Belgaria, Roscia, Walachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, and Muscovites, who, if coldness of country will excuse, might plead for dispensation with the most reason of any." — HIST. OF INFANT BAP., p. 477.

To the above we may add the numerous classes of Christians in the northern latitudes of North America, who practise immersion only for baptism, and the many in the Pedobaptist churches, in the same climates, who are too well enlightened to yield to this papal corruption of baptism, and demand immersion.

We may, perhaps, properly remark, that it is not so much the coldness of the climate as the coldness of the affections which leads professed Christians to feel at liberty to choose their own ways, and dictate to Christ what is decent; consulting their own convenience and comfort, and adopting an action by no means meeting the object of baptism.

Our quotations from history may seem more numerous than is needed in such a work. Yet I have tried to be prudent in this respect. I have not given a thousandth part of what might be quoted from real history, referring to the same points.

But with all the clear Bible instructions on the nature and object of Christian baptism, men of eminence, learning, and piety, in many instances, still cleave to the false traditions of the corrupt and fallen Catholic priesthood, following their practice in changing the meaning and use of words, so as to justify the adoption of sprinkling for baptism.

While the history of the church furnishes the most decided and full testimony that this perversion of the ordinance of baptism originated in the ignorance of half-christianized heathen men, and was forced into the church, and perpetuated by morally depraved and corrupt, ambitious priests, against the instructions, ex-



hortations, and remonstrances of the most faithful ministers and scholars who lived in those times, yet but few men will take the trouble to examine carefully the root of this wild plant, and so are led on in heathen custom by the "traditions of the elders."

With the light of Scripture, the facts of history, the testimony of the most enlightened portions of the church down from the apostolic times, ought we not to pause and consider which is best, whether to take the Bible as our teacher, and obey its plain, simple command to "be buried with Christ by baptism," or pursue the false custom of being sprinkled into the church, and of having our infants sprinkled before they can learn anything of Christ? Ought not ministers of the gospel carefully and prayerfully to study to know the facts involved in this matter, and determine to discover the truth on this subject, in distinction from the "traditions of men?" We believe they all should. Some do, while many entirely neglect it, trusting in the traditions of their fathers, and so pass on.

But it is said there is another side to this subject, and able men also on that side. I know it is so said and believed, and that able and pious men think so; but having gone through the Bible many times to find it, it does not appear. We have gone through many books of men who have done what they could to make another side to it; but it does not appear. Hundreds of books, and thousands of pages have been written to produce another side, yet it does not appear, except in the eyes of those who take for facts what others assert,

and accept for logic what bad reasoners call logic, rather than study closely to know for themselves.

But it may be thought that I implicate able, learned, and thoroughly-read men. Perhaps I do, yet not their honesty or ability. Still, while I know they form their conclusions from the assertions of tradition, and have been trained up under its influence, I conclude they accept the doctrine of sprinkling without properly investigating its foundation. In fact, all their books and arguments plainly show this to be so. When we come to trace their historical references to the fountain-head, we have, it is true, some statements and assertions of eminent men, who are historians; and they remind us of Du Fresne, an eminent French historian, said to be "of extensive literature, of amiable manners, an instructor of all Europe in antiquity;" yet, in enlightened Europe, in the seventeenth century, this same eminent man published a treatise to prove that his native city of Amiens was in possession of that precious relic, "the head of John the Baptist, found at Jerusalem, carried to Constantinople, discovered again in the city of Emesa, then transported to Comana, carried again to Constantinople, where the French found it when they took the city, and whence they conveyed it to Amiens, where it is now enshrined in all the odor of saintship." Are such historical assertions to be believed?

There are a great many such fabulous statements of Catholic historians, and quite too many of Protestants also, about the origin and practice of sprinkling, unaccompanied by proper testimony, or critical discernment.



## THE RECONSIDERATION.

Please call to mind the fact that thousands of Christians in our own times, having been sprinkled in infancy, or after they believed in Christ, because their ministers or books had so instructed, have, after a careful study of the Scriptures, and mature consideration of the subject, become conscious that they had never obeyed the command of Christ, "be baptized," and have been immersed.

To these who have had faith enough to obey Christ, you may add thousands of others who are conscience-smitten and void of Christian enjoyment, while they ponder upon the duty of coming out from the popular tradition of their church associations, and taking up the cross in being buried with Christ in baptism, as they feel confident they ought to do. I doubt not but many will read this work, who are under such convictions. I have baptized a goodly number of such persons after they had lived long in the church, convinced that their sprinkling was not baptism.

But who of you ever knew a Christian, who had been immersed, to be afterward convicted that sprinkling was the proper mode instead of immersion? Who of all Christendom was ever sprinkled for baptism after being immersed? Even since the publication of that wonderful book, which appeared some years ago, from the pen of a Congregational divine, arguing that immersion was not baptism, we have not heard of a case of conviction in that direction. So far from it, that the book is meeting with its justly merited *universal condemnation*.



Call to mind the fact that when truly conscientious men in the ministry have set themselves to dig deep for the root of this matter, with hearts ready to sacrifice everything for truth, they have been obliged to relinquish their former confidence in the validity of sprinkling, repudiate their former teachings and practice, and be themselves baptized, though it cost them the loss of their position and relation in their church associations. Such was the case of that self-sacrificing and devoted pioneer in the Burmese missions, Dr. A. Judson, who was educated under the tradition of sprinkling.

When he entered the ministry he offered himself to God and the church as a missionary to Burmah. He was accepted and sent out by the Congregational order. At that time there was a Baptist mission in Burmah, and he, expecting to meet their teaching and influence on baptism, turned his attention to a full examination of the origin and object of baptism, while on his voyage, to prepare himself successfully to meet the Baptists on that subject in his future fields of labor. This was honest and right. But to his astonishment, and the deep mortification of his friends, who placed much confidence in his integrity and ability, he found that the Bible in English and in the original, taught immersion, and that only, for baptism. As an honest Christian, he could not hide the light, but meekly bowed to it, prosecuted his journey, met the Baptist missionaries, confessed his change of views, was then baptized by them, and entered the work among the heathen, with wisdom, zeal, patience, and endurance

worthy of the undertaking, and of the confidence imposed by those who sent him. The fruits already seen are abundant.

#### CONCLUSION.

In concluding this treatise, let me exhort my brethren in the ministry who differ from me on this subject, to carefully study the Scriptures on this matter, and let them be your guide, casting away the traditions of men. The difference between them is more than you are aware of. Think not that I am writing merely to show you to be in the wrong. I write to stir up your pure desires to know the truth, and practise it. I write to relieve the minds of thousands who are shackled by false tradition, and confused by books of sophistical reasonings. The right and proper observance of the ordinances of the gospel is of much importance.

You may plead that if the motive be right, it matters but little how they are performed. But this is a trait of neglect and recklessness which God never approves. "See that thou make all things according to the pattern," saith God. If we are careless *how* we observe one of God's ordinances, we shall soon come to be careless *how* we observe *all* his precepts, and soon begin to use that artful proverb, "No matter what we believe, if the heart is right."

And to you, my brethren, sisters, and those friends who are convinced of sin, let me say in kindness and Christian affection, if you have been led to think lightly of the ordinance of baptism, to think it of no

special importance, or that it could be observed in two or three different ways, I have directed your attention to the plain Bible account of the duty and object of Christian baptism. I have shown you an abundance of evidence of the perversion and corruption of this ordinance, by which the doctrine of sprinkling has obtained a prominent position in the church, so that multitudes are blindly led on by false tradition to adopt a superstitious heathen practice. I have done this in candor and all good feeling toward all classes. My object is to lead you to examine this subject carefully and prayerfully, and to honor Christ by obeying him.

If you have not yet obeyed the command to be baptized, will you, in the name of Christ, and for the welfare of your own souls, do it? If you have been sprinkled into the church, have faith enough in the death and resurrection of Christ to "put on Christ by baptism into his death." If you were sprinkled while a mere infant, and have become old enough to now "believe and be baptized" into Christ, I beseech you to do so; have the moral and Christian courage to break away from vain superstition, and the prejudices and opinions of friends, that you may obey Christ, receive his blessing, enjoy a good conscience, have fellowship with Christ's sufferings, live to glorify him in this life, and be ready to share the exceeding riches of his glory in the pure, peaceful, and unending kingdom which he will give "to all them that obey him." Amen.



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